



[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2015-2459; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-002-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain The Boeing Company Model 777 airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by reports of fire and smoke at the engine aft pylon area resulting from fuel leakage caused by a damaged O-ring in the fuel coupling attached to the wing front spar. This proposed AD would require applying sealant to fill the gap between the lower wing panels adjacent to the strut aft vapor barrier. We are proposing this AD to prevent fire and smoke at the engine aft pylon area in the event of a fuel leak, which could cause personal injury during ground operations. A fire spreading back and up to the aft fairing pylon can result in an uncontrolled fire in the strut and ignite the fuel tank.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- Fax: 202-493-2251.

- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this proposed AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, P. O. Box 3707, MC 2H-65, Seattle, WA 98124-2207; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 1; fax 206-766-5680; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>. You may view this referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221. It is also available on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2015-2459.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2015-2459; or in person at the Docket Management Facility between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Office (phone: 800-647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kevin Nguyen, Aerospace Engineer, Propulsion Branch, ANM-140S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; phone: 425-917-6501; fax: 425-917-6590; email: kevin.nguyen@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include “Docket No. FAA-2015-2459; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-002-AD” at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this proposed AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposed AD because of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this proposed AD.

Discussion

We received reports of fire and smoke at the engine aft pylon area resulting from fuel leakage caused by a damaged O-ring in the fuel coupling attached to the wing front spar. The fuel was captured by the fuel coupling rubber boot and was discharged into the flammable fluid leakage zone of the strut-to-wing cavity, as intended. However, the fuel did not follow its intended drain paths into the aft strut and lower wing panel drains, but instead followed an unintended drain path through an unsealed gap between the lower wing panels above the strut aft vapor barrier. The leaking fuel then followed gaps and seams in the aft fairing structure to the outside of the strut fairing side panels, ignited after contact with the hot engine exhaust heat shield, and caused a fire and smoke. We are proposing this AD to prevent fire and smoke at the engine aft pylon area in the event of a fuel leak, which could cause

personal injury during ground operations. A fire spreading back and up to the aft fairing pylon can result in an uncontrolled fire in the strut and ignite the fuel tank.

Related Service Information under 1 CFR part 51

We reviewed Boeing Special Attention Service Bulletin 777-54-0035, dated October 30, 2014. The service information describes procedures for applying sealant to fill the gap between the lower wing panels adjacent to the strut aft vapor barrier. This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section of this NPRM.

FAA's Determination

We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all the relevant information and determined the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type design.

Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in the service information described previously.

Explanation of "RC" Steps in Service Information

The FAA worked in conjunction with industry, under the Airworthiness Directive Implementation Aviation Rulemaking Committee (ARC), to enhance the AD system. One enhancement was a new process for annotating which steps in the service information are required for compliance with an AD. Differentiating these steps from other tasks in the service information is expected to improve an owner's/operator's understanding of crucial AD requirements and help provide consistent judgment in AD compliance. The steps identified as RC (required for compliance) in any service information identified previously have a direct effect on detecting, preventing, resolving, or eliminating an identified unsafe condition.

For service information that contains steps that are labeled as Required for Compliance (RC), the following provisions apply: (1) the steps labeled as RC, including substeps under an RC step and any figures identified in an RC step, must be done to comply with the AD, and an alternative method of compliance (AMOC) is required for any deviations to RC steps, including substeps and identified figures; and (2) steps not labeled as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator's maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the RC steps, including substeps and identified figures, can still be done as specified, and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 196 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We estimate the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

Estimated costs

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Sealant application	3 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$255	\$0	\$255	\$49,980

Authority for this Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: "General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority

because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

- (1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Is not a “significant rule” under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979),
- (3) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (4) Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

- 1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

- 2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

The Boeing Company: Docket No. FAA-2015-2459; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-002-AD.

(a) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to The Boeing Company Model 777-200, -200LR, -300, -300ER, and 777F series airplanes, certificated in any category, as identified in Boeing Special Attention Service Bulletin 777-54-0035, dated October 30, 2014.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 54, Nacelles/Pylons.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by reports of fire and smoke at the engine aft pylon area resulting from fuel leakage caused by a damaged O-ring in the fuel coupling attached to the wing front spar. We are issuing this AD to prevent fire and smoke at the engine aft pylon area in the event of a fuel leak, which could cause personal injury during ground operations. A fire spreading back and up to the aft fairing pylon can result in an uncontrolled fire in the strut and ignite the fuel tank.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Sealant Application

Within 1,875 days after the effective date of this AD, apply sealant to fill the gap between the lower wing panels adjacent to the strut aft vapor barrier, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Special Attention Service Bulletin 777-54-0035, dated October 30, 2014.

(h) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the ACO, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (i)(1) of this AD. Information may be emailed to:

9-ANM-Seattle-ACO-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(2) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(3) For service information that contains steps that are labeled as Required for Compliance (RC), the provisions of paragraphs (h)(3)(i) and (h)(3)(ii) apply.

(i) The steps labeled as RC, including substeps under an RC step and any figures identified in an RC step, must be done to comply with the AD. An AMOC is required for any deviations to RC steps, including substeps and identified figures.

(ii) Steps not labeled as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator's maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the RC steps, including substeps and identified figures, can still be done as specified, and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition.

(4) An AMOC that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used for any repair required by this AD if it is approved by the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) that has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO, to make those findings. For a repair method to be approved, the repair must meet the certification basis of the airplane, and the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

(i) Related Information

(1) For more information about this AD, contact Kevin Nguyen, Aerospace Engineer, Propulsion Branch, ANM-140S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; phone: 425-917-6501; fax: 425-917-6590; email: kevin.nguyen@faa.gov.

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, P. O. Box 3707, MC 2H-65, Seattle, WA 98124-2207; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 1; fax 206-766-5680; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>. You may view this referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on June 30, 2015.

Michael Kaszycki,
Acting Manager,
Transport Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 2015-16766 Filed: 7/8/2015 08:45 am; Publication Date: 7/9/2015]